

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00

SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-06 OMB-01 L-03

DODE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /072 W

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R 130852Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2027

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

INFO DEA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 22768

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJ: BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION IN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT

REF: A. BANGKOK 14913 B. BANGKOK 13237

SUMMARY. THAI NARCOTICS POLICE COMPLAIN ABOUT CORRUPTION IN THE PUBLIC PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT; CORRUPTION RESULTING FROM LARGE BRIBE OFFERS AND LOW SALARIES FRUSTRATES ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORT. CLEAN-UP EFFORTS ARE GOING SLOWLY, AND SITUATION MAY NOT IMPROVE SIGNIFICANTLY FOR SOME TIME. END SUMMARY.

1. THAI NARCOTICS POLICE ARE ANGRY OVER THE RELEASE OF MAJOR NARCOTICS VIOLATORS BY THE PUBLIC PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT. OVER THE PAST FOUR MONTHS FOUR PEOPLE ARRESTED BY THE POLICE ON NARCOTICS CHARGES HAVE DISAPPEARED AFTER BEING RELEASED ON BAIL, OR HAVE HAD CHARGES AGAINST THEM REDUCED OR DROPPED ALTOGETHER. ONE OF THOSE RELEASED, PAK YOK-LIN, IS A WELL-KNOWN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKER (REF A). ANOTHER IS A FRENCH SMUGGLER (REF B). HE DISAPPEARED AFTER HIS BROTHER, A KNOWN FRENCH RACKETEER, PAID A \$3,000 BRIBE TO AN OFFICIAL IN THE PUBLIC PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT.

2. CORRUPTION IN THE PUBLIC PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT IS AN OLD  
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STORY IN THAILAND, AND CONTINUES TO PRESENT A SERIOUS PROBLEM

TO THE ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORT (AND TO LAW ENFORCEMENT IN GENERAL). IT FRUSTRATES HONEST POLICE WHO OFTEN WORK LONG, HARD HOURS TO MAKE A GOOD NARCOTICS CASE; IT THWARTS THE THAI JUDICIARY WHICH CAN, AND OFTEN DOES, HAND OUT SEVERE SENTENCES TO NARCOTICS LAW VIOLATORS.

3. IN AN EFFORT TO PUT PUBLIC PRESSURE ON THE GOVERNMENT TO CLEAN UP THE PUBLIC PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT, HIGH RANKING NARCOTICS POLICE OFFICERS BROUGHT THE PROBLEM TO THE ATTENTION OF THE BANGKOK POST, WHICH RAN A PAGE ONE STORY ON AUGUST 10. THE SENI GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY AWARE OF THE SERIOUS LACK OF INTEGRITY AMONG SOME OF THE OFFICIALS IN THE DEPARTMENT, BUT THE PROCESS OF CLEANING IT UP APPEARS TO BE GOING SLOWLY.

4. THERE ARE VAST OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORRUPTION IN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT WORK IN THAILAND. THE PAY SCALE OF THAI OFFICIALS MAKES SUCH OPPORTUNITIES EXTREMELY TEMPTING. THE POLICE MAJOR GENERAL IN CHARGE OF THE POLICE NARCOTIIS SUPPRESSION CENTER (PNSC) EARNS A SALARY OF ABOUT \$450 PER MONTH. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE PUBLIC PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT MAKES ABOUT THE SAME AMOUNT. THE TWO WORKING OFFICERS AT THE PNSC, A LT. COLONEL AND A CAPTAIN, MAKE \$250 AND \$150 PER MONTH RESPECTIVELY. SENIOR POLICE NCO'S MAKE \$75 PER MONTH; THE LOWER RANKS MAKE NO MORE THAN \$50.

5. COMPARED TO THESE LOWLY SALARIES, BRIBE OFFERS MADE BY ARRESTED NARCOTICS VIOLATORS ARE ALMOST ASTRONOMICAL. PAK YOK-LIN, (SEE PARA 1), OFFERED POLICE \$10,000 IN CASH WHEN HE WAS ARRESTED. WHEN THAT WAS REFUSED, HE UPPED THE OFFER TO \$25,000. PAK'S WIFE LATER MADE POLICE AN OFFER OF \$100,000 TO DROP THEIR CASE AGAINST PAK. THE POLICE AGAIN REFUSED, BUT THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR EVIDENTLY FOUND THE OFFER MORE TEMPTING. BRIBE OFFERS OF \$5,000 ARE NORMAL, AND ONE TRAFFICKER OFFERED A WHOPPING \$500,000 TO A NARCOTICS POLICEMAN TO "HELP" HIM OUT.

6. POLICE ONLY RARELY BRING BRIBERY CHARGES IN THESE CASES. BRIBERY IS NOT A SERIOUS CRIME IN THAILAND, AND CASES ARE DIFFICULT TO MAKE. A BRIBE OFFER ITSELF IS NOT ILLEGAL, AND AN ARREST CAN ONLY BE MADE WHEN MONEY ACTUALLY CHANGES HANDS. MOREOVER, THAI COURTS FROWN UPON RAISING A MINOR CHARGE IN A CONFIDENTIAL

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CASE INVOLVING A MORE SERIOUS VIOLATION.

7. MANY HONEST THAI OFFICIALS, INCLUDING CABINET OFFICERS, APPEAR DETERMINED TO SUPPRESS BUREAUCRATIC CORRUPTION. BUT CORRUPTION IN THAILAND IS A PROBLEM THAT WILL NOT LEND ITSELF TO EASY SOLUTIONS. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THERE WILL BE ANY RAPID IMPROVEMENT IN THE INTEGRITY OF THE PUBLIC PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT, AND IT WILL CONTINUE TO BE AN OBSTACLE TO EFFECTIVE NAR-

COTICS ENFORCEMENT IN THAILAND FOR SOME TIME.  
WHITEHOUSE.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DRUG CONTROL, CORRUPTION, BRIBERY  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 13 AUG 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ullricre  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976BANGKO22768  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760311-1067  
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**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 BANGKOK 14913  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ullricre  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 23 JUL 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <23 JUL 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <14 OCT 2004 by ullricre>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION IN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT  
**TAGS:** SNAR, PGOV, PINT, TH  
**To:** STATE CHIANG MAI  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006